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VICTORIAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION

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News and queries

KRISTIN BRADY (University of Western Ontario) has published George Eliot (Houndmills: Macmillan, 1992)--reviewed in the last issue, with the editor's apologies that the title was omitted from the table of contents--and "Phrenology, Physiology, and Patriarchy: the Construction of George Eliot," in Women and Reason, ed. Elizabeth D. Harvey and Kathleen Okruhlik (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1992).

TED CHAMBERLIN (Toronto) has an essay, "Whose Spirit Is This? Some Questions about Beginnings and Endings," in Fin de Siècle/Fin du Globe, ed. John Stokes (London: Macmillan, 1993). This book comes out of a conference on the fin de siècle at the University of Warwick in July 1990.

CLIFFORD G. HOLLAND (Emeritus, OISE) was a visiting scholar in the Department of Philosophy at Memorial University of Newfoundland last year. He gave a seminar in the Master of Philosophy in Humanities Programme on William Dawson LeSueur, the noted Victorian Canadian critic and essayist. Because of experience in hospital administration in the earlier part of his career, Dr. Holland was an Invited Tutor in medical ethics for second-year medical students. His review of volumes 92 and 99 of the DLB should appear in the Winter 1992 Victorian Periodicals Review. His book, The Sage of Ottawa: William Dawson LeSueur, is to be published by Mellen next year.

JUDITH KNELMAN (University of Western Ontario) was co-ordinator of a workshop on "Writing, Editing, and Women and the Media" given at the Journalism School of the University of Nairobi in January 1993. The workshop, organized by the School of Journalism

at Western, was funded by C.I.D.A. NANCY SCHAUMBURGER (Manhattanville College) was Scholar-in-Residence at NYU in June. She presented a paper at the Zora Neale Hurston Conference in Baltimore on the influence of Jane Eyre on Their Eyes Were Watching God. She has an article forthcoming in The Dickensian.

Dr. Schaumburger asks whether anyone is interested in organizing a North American Conference on Dickens, or a conference of Dickens Fellowship chapters in North America, to be located in Canada. If so, please get in touch with her at the Department of English, Manhattanville College, Purchase, NY 10577, USA.

* * *

THE VICTORIAN SOCIETIES IN AMERICA AND GREAT BRITAIN are sponsoring summer programmes in Newport, RI, and in London in 1993. Both courses include lectures, tours, and weekend trips. The London school, directed by Gavin Stamp, architectural historian, will be held 3-24 July at Canterbury Hall of the University of London in Cartwright Gardens. The American school will be held 27 May-6 June at Salve Regina University, Newport, and is directed by architectural historian Richard Guy Wilson. Applications (due 12 March) are available from Judy Van Buskirk, Summer School Coordinator, Victorian Society in America, 219 South 6th St., Philadelphia, PA 19106, USA.

THE RESEARCH SOCIETY FOR VICTORIAN PERIODICALS announces that it has published a continuation of the annotated Madden-Dixon bibliography which covered 1901-1971. The 2085 entries in The Nineteenth Century Periodical Press in Britain: A Bibliography of Modern Studies, 1972-1987 were compiled by VSA member LARRY K. UFFELMAN with assistance from L. Madden and D. Dixon.

A NEW DICTIONARY OF NATIONAL BIOGRAPHY is in preparation. Entries are to be increased from the present 37,000 to about 50,000, and existing entries are to be revised or rewritten. To suggest ways in which the DNB might be improved, to propose entries, or to offer your services, write for a questionnaire to Colin Matthew, Oxford University Press, Walton St., Oxford OX2 6DP, England.

* * *

Conference Notes

At this year's conference, which takes place on Saturday, 17 April 1993, our speakers will cover the beginning and the end of the Victorian period. Dr. James Walvin will be talking on the subject "Black Ivory: Slavery in Victorian Life", while Dr. Deborah Gorham's topic is "Vera Brittain and the Revolt against Victorianism."

Dr. Walvin is the Provost of Alcuin College at the University of York in England. He was educated at the University of Keele, McMaster (where he was a teaching fellow), and at the University of York. He has worked extensively on Victorian social history, and his research interests range from the black presence in Britain to leisure and British society. He has published over a score of books including Black and White: The Negro and English Society, 1555-1945 (London, 1973), for which he won the Martin Luther King Memorial Prize, Beside the Seaside: A Social History of the Popular Seaside Holiday (London, 1978), Football and the Decline of Britain (London, 1986), and Black Ivory: A History of British Slavery (London, 1992). His most recent book is Slaves and Slavery: The British

Colonial Experience (Manchester, 1992). While he is in Toronto, he will also be speaking at a conference being organized at York University.

Dr. Gorham is a professor of History at Carleton University. She was educated at McGill, the University of Wisconsin, and the University of Ottawa. Her research has included both Canadian and British women in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. She has published articles on Canadian suffragists, Flora MacDonald Denison, Victorian childhood, and on Vera Brittain. She edited with Janice Williamson Up and Doing: Canadian Women and Peace (Toronto, 1990) and is the author of The Victorian Girl and the Feminine Ideal (London, 1982). At present she is completing a book on Vera Brittain, tentatively entitled Lady into Woman: Vera Brittain's Life and Work to 1940. She has been a member of the Victorian Studies Association for many years.

The conference will again be held at Oakham House at Ryerson, with the usual breaks for sherry, lunch and the annual meeting. The entertainment will be provided by Rebecca Levere and her brother, who will be performing Victorian songs. Registration will start at 9.30 am. Details will be sent out shortly.

* * *

THE MLA meets in Toronto this year, from 27 to 30 December 1993. The topic for the division on the Victorian period is "Victorian Autobiographies," for which proposals were due by March 1. There is also a proposed special session on "Domestic Violence in Nineteenth-Century British and American Fiction." Send abstracts or 10-page papers by 15 March to Kate Lawson, Department of English, University of Toronto, Toronto M5S 1A1.

The Children's Literature Association is holding a session on Feminist Theory and Children's Literature; contact person is Beverly Lyon Clark, Department of English, Wheaton College, Norton, MA 02766, USA.

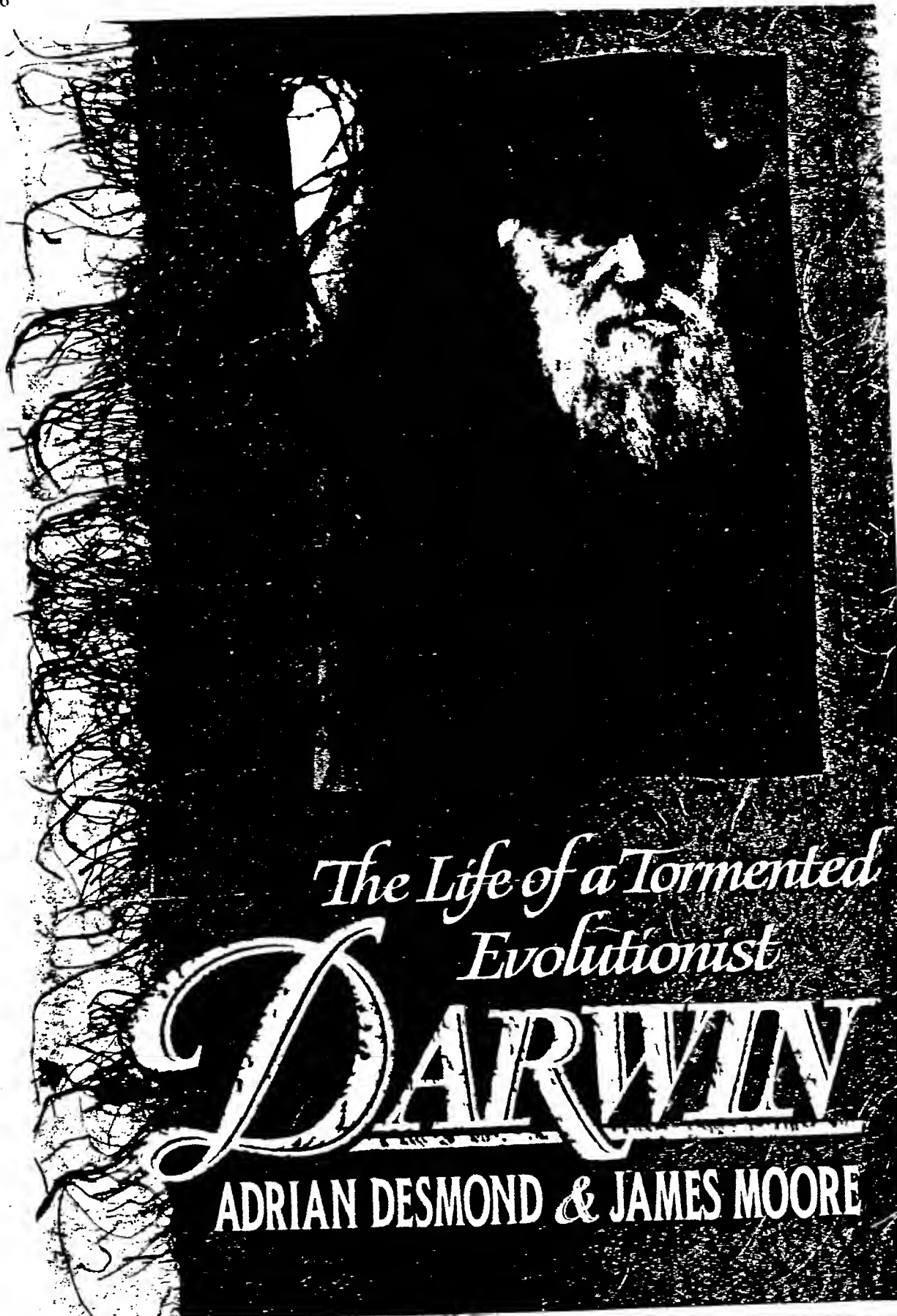
ARNOLD AND VICTORIAN CULTURE is the topic of a conference being held 15-17 April 1993 at Baylor University. For information write to R.L. Brooks, Armstrong Browning Library, Baylor University, P.O. Box 97152, Waco, TX 76798-7152, USA.

WOMEN WRITERS OF EIGHTEENTH- and NINETEENTH-CENTURY BRITAIN are the conference theme at the University of Washington, 6-8 May 1993. Information from W. Packard, Department of English, GN-30, University of Washington, Seattle 98195, Washington, USA.

THE DICKENS PROJECT is hosting an interdisciplinary conference on VICTORIAN MYSTERY on the Santa Cruz campus of the University of California, 5-8 August 1993. Papers are not necessarily restricted to Dickens. Possible topics include mysteries of the text (narratology, genre), mysteries of mind and body (medicine, gender), mysteries of empire or of the spirit, urban mysteries, crime, and so on. For more information write to The Dickens Project, Kresge College 354, University of California, Santa Cruz, CA 95064, USA.

And for those seeking even more exotic locations, a conference on REDISCOVERING OSCAR WILDE will take place 28-31 May 1993, in Monaco. Write The Director, Princess Grace Library, 9 rue Princesse Marie de Lorraine, MC 98000, Monaco.





REVIEW ARTICLE

Darwin: A Tormented Scientist?

Martin Fichman
Department of Multidisciplinary
Studies
Glendon College
York University

Adrian Desmond & James Moore. Darwin: The Life of a Tormented Evolutionist. New York: Warner Books, 1992. xxi + 808 pp., \$41.95.

When Charles Darwin received a copy of a new edition of Das Kapital from Karl Marx--inscribed from a "sincere admirer"--he professed to be somewhat puzzled by a book so different from his own work. He wished that he was "more worthy to receive it, by understanding more of the deep & important subject of political economy. [But, he wrote Marx] no doubt their respective efforts towards the 'extension of knowledge' would 'in the long run ... add to the happiness of mankind'" (601-2). That Darwin was, in fact, well-versed in political economy--and a deeply-involved and well-connected citizen of the Victorian world--is one of the themes of this important new biography by Adrian Desmond and James Moore. The authors have succeeded in integrating two long-separate traditions of historical writing about Darwin. By far the most prominent is that which includes the many works which have elucidated the genesis and development of Darwin's scientific theories in meticulous detail. The second has focussed on particular aspects of Darwin's life, such as his illnesses, his early literary and artistic influences, or his financial activities. Desmond and Moore have provided us with the first

truly comprehensive biography of Darwin. Although their approach is not without serious pitfalls, Darwin: The Life of a Tormented Evolutionist is a major--and, at 808 pages, lengthy--addition to Victorian scientific biography.

Darwin's "torments" derived from two principal sources: his medical condition(s) and the contentious nature, and controversial implications, of his scientific ideas. As to the first, Darwin could well repeat Alexander Pope's celebrated reference to "that long disease, my life". Already by 1834, during the Beagle travels, the young naturalist began to display that maddening and debilitating variety of symptoms that were to plague him throughout his long life:

[While riding towards Valparaiso, Chile] Darwin fell ill, and although a few days' rest seemed to cure him, once in the saddle again his stomach erupted, his appetite vanished, and he became fevered. By 21 September he could scarcely mount his horse. Rest-stops became more frequent, although nothing could prevent him from chipping fossil barnacles from beds along the plain--the proof positive of its marine origin. A further week of suffering, and he was back in Valparaiso, a shambling wreck. He went to bed and stayed there a month. (157)

For the next half century, until his death on 19 April 1882, Darwin suffered from an incessant array of ailments and afflictions--boils, headaches, gout, flatulence, inflamed

lips, dizziness, eczema, recurrent nausea and vomiting, and heart disease. His seemingly endless quest for relief, if not actually efficacious cure, led him to try diets, "electric chains," bismuth, Indian ale, morphia pills, amyl nitrite, quinine and repeated water cures at Down, Ilkley, Malvern, Moor Park and other establishments. Whatever the cause of Darwin's life-long illness(es)--and the medical historians are still debating the point--it is rather remarkable that he was able to accomplish so much with so tortured a frame.

Darwin's "scientific torments" were, perhaps, as constant a feature of his long life as were his medical afflictions. They arose both from the well-known controversies (scientific and cultural) engendered by his and Alfred Russel Wallace's theory of evolution by natural selection and from his own particular sensitivity to criticism. Part of the reason for Darwin's characteristic hesitation in publishing his evolutionary hypotheses surely rests with the religious implications of his work. Although the traditional natural theology of late eighteenth-century Britain had been challenged by Darwin's own grandfather Erasmus Darwin's science--and ridiculed by some during Darwin's medical studies in Edinburgh during 1825-1827--the young naturalist had always been struck by William Paley's works. When he read (1831) the last of the archdeacon's famous trilogy, Natural Theology, Darwin concurred that the evidence of harmoniously-adapted nature argued for a creationist divine workshop (90). When, slightly more than a decade later, Darwin wrote a long letter (11 January 1844) to his friend the botanist Joseph Dalton Hooker, revealing that for seven years he had been gathering evidence to support the

belief in the transmutation of all life, it is therefore understandable that Darwin declared: "I am almost convinced (quite contrary to the opinion I started with) that species are not (it is like confessing a murder) immutable" (314).

Although the precise details of his own journey from belief to agnosticism are still the subject of historical scrutiny, Desmond and Moore make it abundantly clear how painful, if unambiguous, Darwin's retreat from religion was. Perhaps the most painful personal confrontation was that life-long (albeit gentle) dispute with his wife Emma's (Wedgwood) "sentimental, Bible-based faith." Yet in an unpublished manuscript, begun on 28 May 1876 and intended as a posthumous message to the family on the development of his mind and character, Darwin is unequivocal:

just as his [early] clerical career had died a slow "natural death", so his belief in "Christianity as a divine revelation" had withered gradually. There had been no turning back once the death-blow fell. His dithering had crystallized into a moral conviction so strict that he could not "see how anyone ought to wish Christianity to be true ... How could belief in God and immortality be justified, given the conflicting [evolutionary] evidence?" (622-3)

Darwin's agnosticism was manifest throughout his career, as in his impatience with Sir Charles Lyell's hesitation on the implications of human evolution, his disappointment in Wallace's growing embrace of spiritualism, his lengthy battle with the Duke of Argyll's brand of creative evolution in the Reign of Law, his support for the inflammatory

Essays and Reviews, and his efforts to neutralize the impact of a rival biologist's (St. George Mivart's On the Genesis of Species [1871]) attempted repudiation of natural selection by a reconciliation of evolution with Catholicism. In an informative--and ironic--final chapter, the authors detail the machinations by which this "Devil's Chaplain" (as Darwin had once provocatively styled himself)--but now "secular saint"--came to be buried not in St. Mary's churchyard at Down, but in Westminster Abbey.

If, however, Darwin was perennially ill and often sensitive to criticism, he was not a recluse. The portrait so ably and definitively drawn of their subject by Desmond and Moore shatters the image of a cloistered naturalist. True, from 1842 onward, the Darwins lived at Down House, a lovely rural retreat two hours out of London:

Here he was at a safe distance from society. No more worrying about what people might say; the rustics would respect him for the gentleman he was, not judge him by what he thought or wrote. He would see everyone on his own terms, when and as he pleased. The nearest train station, Sydenham, was eight miles away, and the hilly drive cut Down off, secured its inhabitants, preserved their past. A parish set in aspic--the ideal habitat for a gentleman evolutionist. "Down, near Bromley, Kent ... this will be my direction for the rest of my life". (302)

But though Darwin left Down only at infrequent intervals for the next four decades, his mind, his correspondence, his influence, and--preeminently--his active participation in the politics of London science made his a powerful presence in

England.

Darwin's debt to Malthus is well known and the authors recite it clearly. They show the impact of Malthusian ideas on both Darwin's scientific and his political views, establishing him as a "competitive free-trader, in science and out" (334). The key role played by "division of labour" in the genesis and development of the theory of natural selection is also highlighted:

The metaphoric extension was complete. Nature was a self-improving "workshop", evolution the dynamic economy of life. The creation of wealth and the production of species obeyed similar laws. (420)

A word of caution, however, is necessary here. Although the authors persuasively suggest the impact of Victorian ideology on Darwin's scientific work, they often fail to substantiate their specific claims in adequate detail. Indeed, the treatment of the genesis and articulation of Darwin's actual, and prodigious, scientific theorization is the weakest part of this biography. Some of Darwin's major works are treated cursorily. The reader, particularly the historian of science, will perforce turn to the extensive specialist literature on Darwin and the history of nineteenth-century biology for an adequate appreciation of the more technical fortunes of evolutionary theory in the Victorian era. This being said, the authors succeed completely in situating Darwin in cultural context. Indeed, much of Moore's and Desmond's previous writings, notably Desmond's Politics of Evolution (1989), have prepared us for their brilliant analysis of Darwin as a man very much of his time.

What emerges is a picture of an aty-

pically wealthy and well-connected scientist. As a scion of the illustrious Darwin medical family--as well as by virtue of his marriage to a Wedgwood--Charles Darwin benefitted handsomely from Victorian capitalist expansion. In 1881, when Darwin, Hooker, Thomas Henry Huxley and several other prominent scientists succeeded in persuading Gladstone to recommend the relatively impoverished Alfred Russel Wallace for a modest civil list pension of £200 a year, "Emma finished the family accounts, allowing Charles to distribute the surplus from the year's £8000 investment income to the children" (647-8). In his will, Darwin was able, easily, to bequeath £34,000 to each of his daughters and £53,000 to each of his sons (655). As the authors put it somewhat bluntly:

With progress guaranteed in Nature's workshop, as much as it was in Uncle Jos's [Josiah Wedgwood], Darwin's self-evolving Nature was like the expanding, diversifying empires of the Dissenting cotton kings and pottery patriarchs ... Evolution and utilitarian economics were perfectly attuned, and to many Dissenting industrialists this seemed natural. But few were investing so heavily in both areas as Darwin. Economists had called for a specialized work force, free markets, and a rail network to reduce transportation costs. Their utilitarian ethos had led to the railway mania as much as a laissez-faire Nature. Darwin put his mouth where his money was. He spent tens of thousands of pounds on railway companies, and twenty years of his life revealing the competitive, specialized, and labour-intensive aspects of Nature's "workshops". He was placing Nature on industry's side. (421)

Darwin's financial history, however, is but one facet of this compelling biography. I am confident that the wide audience that Moore and Desmond have aimed at will come away with a far deeper appreciation and understanding of the cultural context of Victorian science. Not only is Darwin the mythic scientific sage rendered fully human, but the structure and functioning of the larger Victorian scientific community is illuminated in powerful detail. Darwin was, after all, a member of an emerging professional community of scientists. Though Darwin himself may not have had to work as a lecturer, editor or museum curator to support his career, he was fully embedded in the institutional network of Victorian science. One of the major achievements of this biography is to synthesize the diverse historical advances of the past decade concerning the professionalization of nineteenth-century science in a study of one of its key beneficiaries.

Although the early nineteenth century showed British science to be still largely (but by no means completely) a preserve of the gentry--mainly Tory and Anglican--by the 1840s and 1850s the "chill winds of professionalism were blowing across the old order" (433). The Great Exhibition of 1851--whose vast new glass-and-iron Crystal Palace at London's Hyde Park documented the industrial dreams of the Lunar Society, of Boulton and Wedgwood, Priestley and Erasmus Darwin--testified, in Prince Albert's tribute to the Queen on opening day, to the outcome of social harmony "aided by ... modern science." Significantly, many of the young

poets and professors, doctors and lawyers, novelists and naturalists, journalists and politicians ... lured to London ... believed

that the new age of the Crystal Palace demanded liberal, progressive reforms: that nature's interpreters had a fair claim to the status and rewards enjoyed by the Anglican Establishment ... This [rising] intellectual elite ... were the new constituency for evolution, committed to progress, technology, and the naturalizing of morals and man. As the champions of change, they were making the world safe for Darwin. (391-2)

Fundamental to this process was the new prestige and status accorded scientists and the agents of science-based industry. The flagship of free-thought and reform, the Westminster Review, included among its directorate John Chapman, Marian Evans (later George Eliot), John Stuart Mill, and--significantly--the Unitarian physiologist William Carpenter, Robert Chambers (the author of Vestiges of Creation), Herbert Spencer, and the "angry young ship's surgeon", Thomas Henry Huxley (392-3). During the 1850s and 1860s the voice of a new professional class of scientists became increasingly articulate and powerful in Great Britain (as elsewhere in Europe and North America).

By 1856 the Young Guard was organizing. Huxley, Hooker, [the pugnacious Irish physicist John] Tyndall and their fellow travellers were discussing strategy and marking out enemies. First on their list of priorities was to claw more power for London science lecturers and gain a greater "command over the public"--and the public purse. They saw themselves as grossly underpaid compared to the clerical naturalists of Cambridge and they bitterly resented it.

(431)

Their success was profound: this

fast non-Oxbridge set were already sliding into positions of power. Huxley got his break in November 1854 and started regular teaching at the Royal School of Mines in Jermyn Street, Piccadilly. Then, "sick of the dilettante middle class," he began his famous working men's lectures a year later. Tyndall had taken the chair of natural philosophy at the Royal Institution in 1853, and was soon helping Huxley run the science section of the Westminster Review ... The [older scientific] societies were transforming rapidly, with great stirs inside the Royal and even the soporific Linnean, which Darwin joined in 1854 in the hope of new times. The Royal Society was now awash with fresh blood, and it showed in the way the medals were falling. Huxley took the Royal Medal in 1852; Tyndall was named with Darwin in 1853, and Hooker in 1854, for his work on "the origin and distribution" of plants ... When Huxley talked of his "scientific young England," he envisioned new standards, new status, new rewards: a science seized from the old clergy's hands and revamped--naturalized--and made serviceable to new mercantile masters. (411)

Although Darwin himself still had a foot in both camps--his wealth and standing allied him to the old gentry as much as his revolutionary theory and professional associations marked him as one of the new professional scientific priesthood--his career certainly advanced as a direct result of the new scientific order. The "X Club"--formed as a "sort of masonic Darwinian lodge" in 1864 by Huxley, Hooker, Tyndall, Spencer, Sir John Lubbock and several colleagues--soon came to exert a disproportionate influence on British science by "pull-

ing the Presidential strings" of the Royal Society (525-6). With the founding of the semi-popular journal Nature in 1870, these aggressive professionals celebrated the freeing "of science from aristocratic patronage, and [placing] an intellectual priesthood at the head of English culture" (526).

Desmond and Moore are at their best when delineating the brilliant manoeuvres by which Darwin's friends assisted in the success of his theories at the same time as they transformed the institutional base of

British science: "Secular expertise was being wedded to Britain's technological and imperial salvation. The nation's health was linked to the professional scientist's own" (489). And although the theory of evolution by natural selection itself began to suffer renewed strong criticism by the close of Darwin's life, Darwin's own status as a patron saint of the new professional scientific elite was by then assured. Desmond and Moore's excellent biography explains why this apparent paradox was so.



Books

Stefan Collini. Public Moralists: Political Thought and Intellectual Life in Britain, 1850-1930. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991. 383 pp. \$102.

Leaving aside (for the moment) the question of nutritional value, only the dullest of appetites could fail to appreciate the richly and piquantly prepared intellectual feast a work by Stefan Collini invariably provides. The choicest ingredients alone are acceptable to the chef, and their combination betokens an unmistakable Collinian cuisine. An example: "It was hardly surprising that Sidgwick, pukka representative of the universities' sense of their own dignity, should deal rather dismissively with Kidd, best-selling popularizer who was asset-stripping the failing enterprise of sociology" (245).

The nourishment to be had from Public Moralists: Political Thought and Intellectual Life in Britain, 1850-1930 is wholly commensurate with the flavour and presentation. A work of vast erudition and great analytical power, Collini's Public Moralists fashions an unparalleled exposition of the sensibilities and assumptions that pervasively influenced political argument in Victorian and early twentieth-century Britain (the emphasis being very much on the nineteenth century). Collini offers not a systematic analysis of selected texts but rather an inquiry into the social and cultural attitudes that tellingly affected the engagement of an intellectual elite with a wide range of political issues, practical and theoretical. The Victorians whose writings figure most prominently are J.S. Mill, John Austin, Leslie and Fitzjames Stephen, Henry Fawcett, Benja-

min Kidd, T.H. Green, Henry Sidgwick, Henry Maine, and A.V. Dicey. There is a large supporting cast, including Matthew Arnold, Herbert Spencer, George Eliot, Walter Bagehot, John Morley, Charles Kingsley, James Bryce, E.A. Freeman, A.C. Bradley, Frederic Harrison, Mrs. Humphry Ward, Alfred Marshall, and F.W. Maitland. Much can be made of such human material in connection with the problems that absorb Collini, and he is not one to waste opportunities.

The book is divided into four parts. Part I, "Governing Values," delineates the social and political world inhabited by the leading intellectuals of Victorian Britain, establishes the location many of them occupied within the governing classes of that society, and sets forth the essentially moral lineaments that habitually informed their intellectual enterprise. Affirming "the primacy of morality" in Victorian culture, Collini deftly articulates his conception of the paramount claims made upon that morality by "the culture of altruism," and "the idea of character." Part II, "Public Voices," features a very fine fifty-page chapter on "John Stuart Mill as a Public Moralist" (Mill is the pivotal figure of Collini's study), to which is joined a searching essay on the theme of "manliness" in the thought of Henry Fawcett and Leslie Stephen. Part III, "Moral Sciences," examines with characteristic perspicacity the continuities and changes in sensibility and concern arising from the advancing academic specialization of the late nineteenth century; it also explores the theme of the "jurist as public moralist," with especial reference to the thought of Austin, J.F. Stephen, Maine, and Dicey. Part IV, "English Genealogies," considers J.S. Mill's reputation in the sixty years after his death with a view to exhibiting

the forces in English culture responsible for Mill's transfiguration from "dangerous partisan to national possession," and closes the volume with a notably suggestive account of the uses made of literary history in the construction and definition of national identity. Although each of the four parts, indeed each of the chapters, could function effectively as a free-standing structure (versions of some of the essays have appeared elsewhere), recurrent motifs and complementary illuminations integrate them into a coherent complex.

Some of these motifs have debuted in Collini's previous publications. His remarkable facility for textual analysis has always been subsumed by his fascination with the social and cultural forces moulding the structure and function of the eristic discourse the texts embody. His conviction that no satisfactory explication of Victorian political argument can be constituted without attending to the problem of "character" is evident in the first chapter of his first book, Liberalism and Sociology: L. T. Hobhouse and Political Argument in England, 1880-1914 (Cambridge UP, 1979): "... one of the most distinctive features of the political argument of the period seems to me to be the independent and overriding value assigned to the fostering of 'character' as a primary aim of politics" (28). Collini returns to this theme, if only intermittently, in the 1983 book he co-authored with Donald Winch and John Burrow, That Noble Science of Politics: A Study in Nineteenth-Century Intellectual History (Cambridge UP). This second book also carries intimations of his abiding interest in the nature and impact of professionalization, whose variegated components receive sharp and sustained discussion in Public Moralists. The proposition that Victorian intel-

lectual life and its moral preoccupations experienced radical transformation during the course of the second half of the nineteenth century has consistently met with a healthy measure of scepticism from Collini. He does, however, make a powerful case for the view "that the late nineteenth century saw a process which may be identified as the 'nationalization' of English culture, that is, the softening of many of the political and religious divisions that had marked the first half of the century, and the deliberate creation or extension of national cultural institutions" (347). While it would be injudicious to suppose that Collini has concluded his scrutiny of these matters, Public Moralists embraces them all and gives to each a penetrating and incisive treatment.

Public Moralists is a book of ramifying themes, and no theme in it ramifies more widely than that which Collini aptly refers to as "the culture of altruism." Far from manifesting a "commitment to rational egoism" (87), mid-Victorian culture strove to subdue individual selfishness in the interest of the common good. Although Collini occasionally presses this point beyond my comfort threshold, he has fixed upon something of cardinal importance. The "Age of Improvement" was not an age of complacency, and the principal content of the improvement sought was moral in nature. Corresponding to the "primacy of morality" in Victorian culture is the primacy of Public Moralists as a study of that morality. It is a distinguished work by a distinguished cultural historian.

Bruce Kinzer
University of North Carolina at
Wilmington

* * *

Patricia Anderson. The Printed Image and the Transformation of Popular Culture, 1790-1860. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991. 211 pp. \$59.95.

A world without the ubiquitous presence of visual images is difficult to imagine. Everywhere in our domestic and professional lives we encounter pictorial stimuli as sources of entertainment, information, and influence. Yet, as Patricia Anderson demonstrates in The Printed Image and the Transformation of Popular Culture, 1790-1860, this resource has only been available to the general public for approximately one hundred and fifty years. Anderson's book explores the rapid development of the printed image, primarily in the illustrated weeklies, and its key role in the creation of a new mass culture. Though the literature is extensive, Anderson believes her study fills a gap in the work on inexpensive printed imagery. "With comparatively few exceptions," she explains, "what has been written about popular illustration fails to situate it in any wider social or cultural context" (12). She is interested in how this material made dramatic changes in the daily lives of working people, even those who were illiterate. She focuses on England but advises the reader that "much of what will be said could have wider bearing" for the British Isles (14).

By 1840 the proliferation of inexpensive weekly publications offered the working and lower middle classes a wide range of affordable options: two thirds of the seventy-eight weeklies sold for one penny and the rest sold for no more than two (157). The four illustrated weeklies chosen by Anderson for close examination--the Penny Magazine (1832-45), the London Journal (1845-1906), Reynolds's Miscellany (1846-69), and Cassell's Illu-

strated Family Paper (1853-1932)--"were the first ... to attract and maintain a readership of one million or more each" (3). In the introductory first chapter, Anderson sets the stage for the "transformation" by trying "to reconstruct some of that (limited popular pictorial) experience" of the preceding four decades (15). Though prints and illustrated books were priced beyond the reach of working people, their visual appetites could be somewhat assuaged through the wood engravings and woodcuts of chapbooks and broadsides, both secular and religious. Anderson found little evidence of self-help and radical political imagery, however, before the early 1830s. People's desire for pictorial and textual information helps explain editor and publisher Charles Knight's success with the Penny Magazine. Anderson acknowledges Knight's contributions to developing a mass audience while recognizing his elitist moralizing and civilizing ambitions. She



17. *Laocöon*, *Penny Magazine*, 1832

credits Knight rather than the weekly's sponsor, the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, for introducing quality wood engravings of high art for edification purposes. This serious tone set the Penny Magazine apart from its more entertainment-oriented successors.

Though the new miscellanies can be credited with adding current events to their offerings, Anderson laments the increasing use of art as a "filler" and the subsequent retreat of "high culture" (110). As Anderson explains, "The Dying Gladiator had ... given way to needlework patterns and game boards, fashion and war illustration, images of the theatrical world and its players, and, above all, to the teeming life and lines of the engraved illustration of popular fiction" (137). Appropriately, Anderson provides her readers with ample visual examples of typical front pages from these pictorial miscellanies. What reader with a penny to spare could pass up the title pages with well-drawn narrative illustrations of terrified maidens and dangerous villains complemented with equally compelling serials by G. M. Reynolds himself or Pierce Egan?



26. Scene from *Wagner*, Reynolds's *Miscellany*, 1847

Readers, Anderson argues, consisted of a "social cross-section of women and men, the poor and comparatively prosperous, the literate and the unlettered, the young and the not so, the middle and the working classes--they were, in a word, the mass" (137). The "social cross-section" of this mass experience differentiated it from earlier popular culture. Here Anderson parts company with E.P. Thompson's and others' more cohesive views of distinct working-class and middle-class cultures. Anderson stresses that though the miscellanies emphasized certain civilizing values, like hard work, moderation, self-improvement, and patience, "there is no evidence that [editors] Stiff, Reynolds, Cassell, and others involved in the magazines' production were motivated by class fears for the stability of society." The public demonstrated its "acceptance of these values" through their strong and continued purchases (129).

Anderson's discussion of the miscellanies' courting of its female readers is among the more interesting topics in her book, as is her analysis of the authors and content of the correspondence columns, forerunners to "Dear Abby." While "personal morality, domestic skills, and physical appearance" motivated the majority of the letters, by the 1850s the columns also served lovelorn Victorian males searching for mates (151).

Anderson's conscientious scholarship is evident in her copious and well-researched footnotes and bibliography, which draw heavily on primary source material from English collections. She is careful to define her terms, e.g. mass, popular and high, and to acknowledge the theoretical underpinnings of her conclusions and the limitations of her primary sources. Though the author's conversation-

al style can be distracting, at the same time it serves to include the reader in her surmising, which was necessary in researching early Victorian workers' responses to accessible visual materials.

Some readers may find the book's continual repetition of key ideas unnecessary: short as the text is (only 198 pages) it could have been even more concise. Nevertheless, this is a quibble in what is otherwise a highly readable, highly informative, and delightfully visual exploration of the predecessors of the mass media.

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* * *

Norman White. Hopkins: A Literary Biography. Oxford University Press, 1992. 531 pp. \$91.

Norman White's new biography is another indication of the displacement of Hopkins' poems by his personal history. More or less coinciding with the 1989 centenary of his death, study of Hopkins entered a new stage. The longstanding order of importance had been: first, poems; then prose writings (in a truly Victorian fecundity of letters, journals, notebooks, essays, sermons, devotions and theological speculations as well as drawings); and lastly dates, events and public and private details and minutiae. Readers who had antecedent admiration of the poems might be naturally curious about the poet's (and for Catholics the specialized interest was the priest-poet's) family, background, education before and at Oxford, friends, conversion to Catholicism, entry into the Jesuits, life as a Jesuit, continuing friendship with Robert Bridges, the tenuous

survival of his poems in manuscript and finally his early death. But now, in White's large and comprehensive biography, the poems emerge sporadically as anomalies in an unhappy life which is presented as misdirected every time religious motives took precedence over life- or art-affirming ones. The scrupulously detailed events of the life, and the concurrent goings-on in the institutions whose calendars give us impersonal daily agenda, do not hold the poems together in a coherent pattern. And the small bulk of art in Hopkins' life seems too inconsequential to endow the life with meaning. The result is dispiriting. In "The Windhover" sheer plod makes plough down sillion shine, but the same is not necessarily true in biography. Despite the trend, some readers still look for an inscape of Hopkins in which art and life illuminate each other rather than throw each other into deeper shadow.



Hopkins in April 1888

In the quasi-paternalistic way that a biographer almost cannot avoid when writing about a subject who made so many decisions which the biographer regards as wrongheaded, White implies the question repeatedly through the book: what should Hopkins have done with his life? A tone of petulant correctiveness pervades White's comments:

The inscapes he sees and instresses he feels depend on his ways of looking or feeling, in spite of the pretence that they are buried in nature. ... In a guilty reaction against his schoolboyish pride in authorship (which remained with him), he tried to disguise responsibility for his own feelings. (200)

White disagrees profoundly with a spiritual content of Hopkins' poems:

["The Wreck of the Deutschland"] is a poem about unmaking, unfathering, unchilding; compassion is begged for rather than described; and the acknowledgement of the nature of God (reality) only comes about after harsh and bitter personal torment, physical and mental. ... Behind the poem's ostensible message of a divinely balanced justice lie echoes of fatalism, disenchantment, and pessimism. (256-7)

In both octaves ["God's Grandeur", "The Starlight Night"] there is a vivid sense of Hopkins's urgency to communicate his state of perceptual excitement and the qualities of the natural things which have excited him; but in the sestets it appears to me as if a different, authoritarian voice, representative of tradition, has superimposed an alien framework onto the novel and personal emo-

tions and sights. It is as if the poet's urgent responses have been not just dampened down but blotted out and replaced ... (268)

For this reviewer, White has not caught Hopkins' inscape. He has dutifully explored the instress of Hopkins, applying a secular understanding to that term. White's meditation on the stress, the instress, of Hopkins' existence, has produced an ironic attitude to the Jesuits that is often harsh in its tone and paratactic in its rhetorical deployment. White finds no purpose in Hopkins' life, no inner law which gave it its characteristic manifestation--he does not believe in Hopkins' inscape and thus he does not attempt to portray it. It does not take mystical insight to recognize that inscape is conditional on some species of belief. "And but the beholder wanting" qualifies not only physical presence but spiritually being-there as well. The succession of titles for the six parts into which the book is divided implies discontinuity and shows a bias which pervades every insight: The Boy, The Student, The Jesuit, The Poet, Fortune's Football, The Stranger.

That Hopkins was an unpublished poet, and what it means to be an unpublished poet, become unexpectedly clear in White's biography. The biographer never has a chance to dwell on a period of artistic composition in which the poet gave himself to his art. Attention to the drawn-out process of composition, which is surely one of the main attractions of literary biography, remains out of sight, beyond everyone's ken. Comparably, a biography of Shakespeare which had every detail of his private life and objective information about the appearance of his plays, but no resonance of composition, would be most

unsatisfactory, however grateful we might be for the facts. The object lesson is that Hopkins composed on the wing, and if he succeeded in becoming a major poet by not assiduously devoting himself to serious composition, at least from time to time, then his talent was all the more remarkable.

White's quest is admirable: to reconstruct the whole of Hopkins' life. But there is a difference between completeness and wholeness. White constructs an elaborate *mise-en-scène* of ancestors, costumes, divertissements, classmates, masters, companions, tutors, infatuations, superiors, etc., but the theatrical magic, the play itself that integrates them all, never occurs. The stage set could not be more skillfully imagined or depicted, but the needed spell-binding role has no personator.

The merits of White's biography are that it presents much material, much long reflection and years of physical tracking of the subject through his haunts. The main limitation of the biography is a lack of sympathy with the decisions the subject made. This lack of sympathy forestalls the understanding that a friend gives to a friend. The question broods powerfully over this work: is it possible for there to be a secular biography of a man who died to prove himself religiously spiritual? This life will not satisfy readers of Hopkins who have beheld him from their own standpoint, who have inscaped Hopkins through his poems. Like many scholarly biographies, however, White's extraordinarily well-researched volume will be a standard reference work for knowledge about Hopkins' life.

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* * *

Pamela Kanwar. *Imperial Simla*. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1990. 316 pp. \$33.95.

In recent years imperial history has moved in increasingly diverse directions. Where it once concerned itself largely with constitutional and political questions, it now looks at such topics as sex and imperialism or the imperial imagination. *Simla*, the absurd and impractical capital of British India for more than half the year, makes a promising subject for this newer sort of history.

There can scarcely be a more potent example of the British presence in India than *Simla*, with its wilful mixture of English, Scottish and Indian styles, its remoteness from most of the Indian subjects of the Raj, and its hierarchy reflected so neatly in its layout, with the Viceroy living on the highest hill and the Indians jammed into unsavoury quarters down below the spacious European areas. Pamela Kanwar's well-researched *Imperial Simla* explores the history of *Simla*, its social mix, and its inner tensions, but somehow it rarely gets beyond its parts.

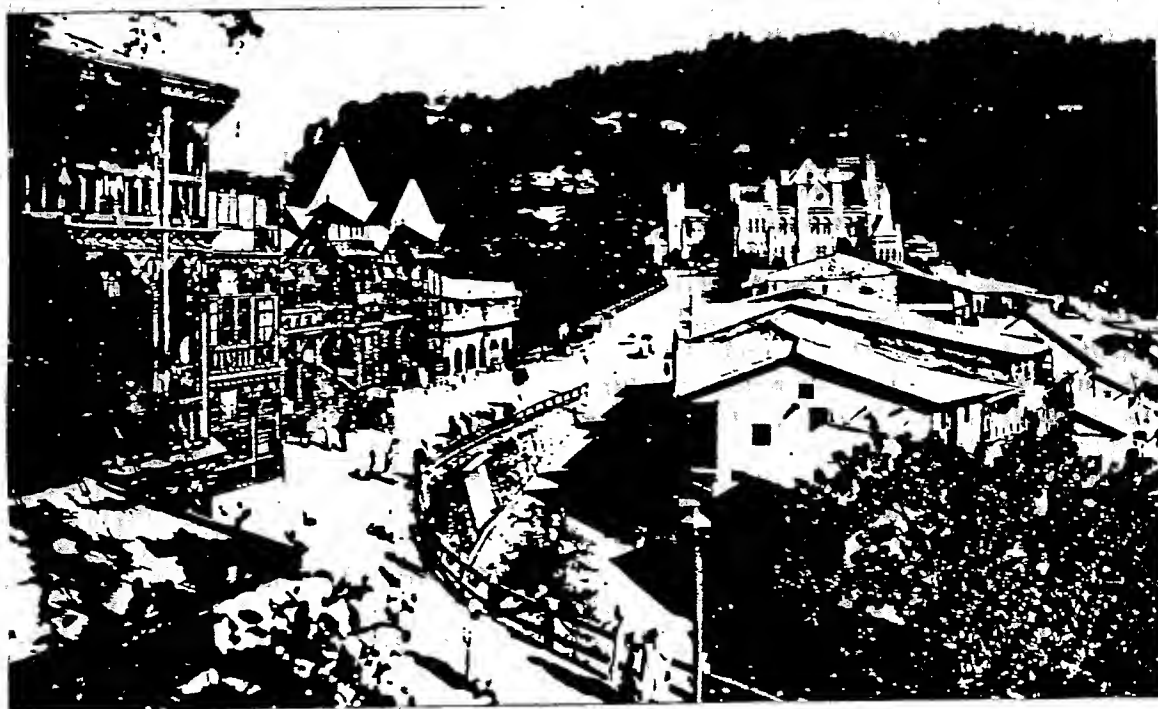
She is best on the urban history of *Simla*, from its humble beginnings in the early nineteenth century as a hunting ground for British officers on leave, to the centre of power celebrated by Kipling. In the early 1820s *Simla* consisted of a couple of holiday cottages but gradually both keen sportsmen and convalescents made their ways there. The annexation of the Punjab in 1849 shifted British attention to the north-west and it became customary for governors-general to break their tours of the plains with a short visit to *Simla*.

By the 1860s custom had hardened into practice and others, notably Army Headquarters and the Punjab Government, followed the viceregal example. Each year, until the British left India in 1947, the Government of India, its major departments, its officials and clerks, and its files moved up to Simla for seven months, doubling the town's population. There were, not surprisingly, criticisms both from British businessmen and from Indian nationalists that the move was expensive, disruptive, and distanced the Raj even more than usual from its subjects. The reply was invariably that the cool bracing air of Simla in fact made government immeasurably more efficient and productive.

The town that grew up on the ridges was perhaps best described by Edward Lutyens, the architect of New Delhi. "If one was told the monkeys had built it all one could only say, what wonderful monkeys--they must be shot in case they do it again" (69).

Houses with names like the Yarrows, Strawberry Hill, or Rose Bank were built with local materials and techniques but were determinedly European in appearance. One of the few relatively flat roads, the Mall formed not only the meeting place for the European inhabitants but the dividing line between European upper and Indian lower Simla.

The story of British society in Simla has been told before and Professor Kanwar, perhaps wisely, does not attempt to add anything new. Her section on the Indian population, however, is one of the most interesting and original parts of the book. Although Indians made up the overwhelming population of Simla, their society has been largely ignored. The whole place would of course have collapsed without them. The authorities recognized this but constantly tried to ensure that only necessary Indians came to Simla. In the name of disease control, they instituted a plague post on the road to Simla where every



The Mall and Scandal Point. The Post Office is on the left. The new Town Hall dominates the Ridge.

visitor had to provide his name and address. (The post, which survived until 1950, proved most useful in keeping nationalist workers out of Simla.)

Over 30% of the inhabitants of Simla in the high season were clerks and other low ranking government employees who had to move when the Government of India moved. Many came from Bengal or Madras and deeply disliked the cold and damp of the hills. They helped to create modern Simla, by insisting, for example, on decent schools for their children and by establishing religious associations which engaged in social and educational work. At the lowest level of society were the messengers, the ordinary labourers and the sweepers who kept the town clean. The rickshaw coolies' lot was exceptionally miserable: Kanwar details a particularly notorious case in the 1920s in which a rickshaw coolie was abused and kicked by a British officer because he had stumbled on his verandah. The coolie died of a ruptured spleen and the matter would have been hushed up if it had not been for the efforts of a local Indian politician.

The book is also interesting on the impact of Simla on local society. Simla provided employment, stimulated trade, and was the means of introducing new products including the potato which rapidly became a staple of the local diet. It was also responsible for the unsavoury practice of forcing local farmers to carry, free, the luggage of British travellers; the practice was not phased out until the early 1920s.

With the growth of Indian nationalism, the move to Simla came under attack. In nationalist mythology the Mall became a potent symbol of the racial attitudes of the British. It

was asserted and widely believed that Indians were not allowed to walk along the Mall. Pamela Kanwar shows that the story was more complicated than that. There was no municipal ordinance banning Indians from the Mall--but in their usual pragmatic British fashion the authorities used their powers to prevent loitering to discourage Indians. With independence, Simla rapidly lost its importance. National pride and air conditioning meant that it was no longer desirable or necessary to move to the hills. Well-to-do Indians continue to go there in the summer and in 1966 an official presence of sorts was restored when it became the capital of the new state of Himachal Pradesh.

Professor Kanwar has produced some interesting urban history. It is a pity that she did not go further in exploring the relationship between the races who coexisted and who depended on each other. The main weakness of the book lies not in its research, which is excellent, but in its analysis. Although the author refers to relatively recent work on the development of hill stations in Asia she does not do much with it. It is a pity too that she did not do more with the buildings and layout of Simla (as, for example, Bernard Cohn is now doing with New Delhi) and explore the ways in which the material environment reflects the imperial dream.

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* * *



Lucia Zedner. Women, Crime, and Custody in Victorian England. Oxford Historical Monographs. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991. 364 pp.; \$102.

Were female prisoners really harder to control than their male counterparts in Victorian England, or was it simply that more of them were feeble-minded or chronically drunk? If so, why were female alcoholics harder to control than male alcoholics?

Lucia Zedner sets out these provocative questions, among others, in a fascinating context of clues, though it is not possible to provide conclusive answers. The prison system, designed and run by men, was simply more comfortable dealing with men. Men could be more roughly treated and consequently spent much of their waking time out of doors, on public works. But women, for whom hard labour was considered inappropriate, spent all their time inside and at close quarters. They were often initially given tedious tasks such as picking out loose fibres from old

rope, then promoted to cleaning or doing laundry so that they could develop "feminine" domestic attitudes. They were given instruction in reading so that they could gain inspiration from the Bible. And they were visited by evangelical chaplains and ladies trying to instil moral values.

Despite these lofty efforts, prisons for women were rife with sexual activity, blackmail, bartering of favours for deliveries from outside, defiance, and outright rebellion. The men running them could not understand this state of affairs. By the end of the century, when definitions of crime tended to take account of individual circumstances like poverty or biological or psychological disorders, those in charge reacted by treating female prisoners as if they were, to use the terms Zedner uses, mad rather than bad. Which does much to explain why by the end of the century there were more females than males in lunatic asylums.



Another reason behind this phenomenon, of course, is the conviction (still with us in some quarters today) that it is unnatural (and therefore either mad or bad) for a woman to deny her role as nurturer. Incurrigible, loose women came to be regarded as feeble-minded. They were seen as helpless victims of their weaknesses. The system's expectations for them were downgraded accordingly. Zedner maintains that much of what is wrong with current penal policy for women is due to its domination by such nineteenth-century ideas.

The book is, appropriately enough, far more descriptive than prescriptive. It has a strong historical base, pointing out, for example, that long-term incarceration for women became necessary in the 1850s when first Van Diemen's Land and then Western Australia stopped importing female convicts from Britain. In addition to straight history, Zedner draws not only on official reports and parliamentary papers, which have been used before, but on letters and memoirs, home office documents, and daily records kept by prisons. The book has a substantial bibliography (to which Martin J. Wiener's 1990 book Reconstructing the Criminal should be added) and an extremely useful historiographic first section that lays out Victorian views of female deviance, taking account of modern interpretations. After this there is perhaps too much detail.

A book that is a reworking of a doctoral thesis tends to be a mixed blessing. While it is unlikely to overlook anything that has been published on the topic under discussion, by the same token work that has been designed to please a committee may lack the personal touch of a confident author who makes judgments and choices for the reader. Comprehen-

siveness and objectivity are all very well for encyclopedias, but in the age of sophisticated indices and bibliographical searches, they can move a mere book over the edge from helpful to daunting.

This otherwise admirable study, based on doctoral research, reads, alas, as if it were written by a machine. It is so highly organized that "we" are reminded regularly of what has already been covered. Hence, in the fifth chapter: "As we saw in the first two chapters ...". Or, in the seventh, "This book has traced ...", "This chapter examines ...", "We will examine ...". We are told that "so far we have considered" one thing but that now "it is necessary to consider" another. Doubtless this sort of graceless connecting is necessitated by the abundance of facts and citations. It seems to me that if the sheer volume of material is more than a writer can cope with without constantly reminding herself and the reader of where she has been and where she is going, it needs pruning.

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* * *

Jonathan Freedman. Professions of Taste: Henry James, British Aestheticism, and Commodity Culture. Stanford University Press, 1990. \$29.50 U.S.

In defending, not without defensiveness, the placement of Henry James in yet another literary or aesthetic context, Jonathan Freedman begins his Professions of Taste with a brief review of Jamesian criticism from Van Wyck Brooks on. And in so doing he makes yet another compelling case for seeing James in the role in which he himself cast Flaubert: "the lion in

the path," the end to which all literary roads lead.

The school of Brooks and Parrington attacked James for his very aestheticism (as a youthful T. S. Eliot remarked, he had a mind so fine no idea could violate it), but failed to recognize that James was as disapproving of the aesthete as they themselves: Gilbert Osmond, the malign "prince in disguise" of The Portrait of a Lady, represents his most definitive statement of that disapproval. But the procurers of the James revival of the 1940s and '50s also misunderstood James's relations with aestheticism: by seeking to acquit him of the Brooks-Parrington charges they bruited widely his morality and his realism while muting his relations with the aesthetic movement. Freedman's peroration maintains that the generation of Pound and Eliot, as well as the New Critics, closed their eyes to their debt to the British Aesthetes, Pater, Wilde and Swinburne in particular, and may have persuaded themselves there was no debt, by seeing James, the Master, as not a part of the British Aesthetic movement either.

Mr. Freedman's task is one of such complexity as to tax the confined space of a reviewer. It is to use the well-recognized portrait of James as one who dwelt in the palace of art, but who also possessed a great will to power, and to picture him ultimately as an apostle of art for art's sake. In turning the artifact into a commodity James actually opened the way to the growth of the consumer society (in his yearning for commercial success he betrayed his fundamental Americanness) as well as bridged the gap between the aesthetic movement and the modernist. Mr. Freedman manages his task, in a very tightly argued 250 pages, and leaves

James to be seen, convincingly and illuminatingly, as "a [perhaps the] crucial figure in the transformation of British aestheticism into high Anglo-American modernism".

While this rich book moves, for most of its length, on a theoretical plane, it gives a clearer and more cogent view than we have had to date of the aesthetic movement, both in its artistic beliefs and its historical associations, and especially in their migration to America. But it is perhaps as a history of the movement that Professions of Taste is to be most valued. And its applications of its hypotheses also supply new readings of the Jamesian canon. There is a "fairly ludicrous" (in the author's words) comparison between The Ambassadors and The Picture of Dorian Gray which nonetheless places both novels (and both authors) in a Paterian world where--one of the points of linkage--"to become the spectator of one's own life ... is to escape the suffering of life". This is Dorian Gray speaking but it might have been placed as epigraph to James's novel, or to his oeuvre. Strether, indeed, if only vicariously, is one who finds in his own life, though it may not burn with a gem-like flame, a quickened intensity even as he remains outside life.

There is an illuminating discussion of The Portrait of a Lady which sees it, in the early days of James's engagement with aestheticism, as afflicted with a "contagion" of the aesthetic disease; and in so arguing, Freedman renders some measure of justice to Osmond (though this is not his purpose). For Ralph Touchett and Isabel are as much aesthetes as the accepted villain, and James emerges from the novel, Freedman maintains, with one of two paths to take--the rejection of aestheticism altogether,

or the pursuit of its benign, perhaps even redemptive, features.

While some progress is made along the second path in The Ambassadors, it is with The Wings of the Dove and The Golden Bowl, dealt with (with some slight violation of chronology) in a chapter called "The Decadent Henry James", that the synthesis of aesthetic idealization and manipulative worldly power is achieved. The rigorous analysis of The Wings of the Dove leads to the conclusion (reached from a different direction thirty years ago by Dorothea Krook, in one of the best books on James) that Milly's self-aestheticization is also an actualization of her power, and that she is finally as much manipulator as manipulated.

But Milly Theale dies in (or of) her triumph. Maggie Verver does not, and it is the examination of The Golden Bowl which brings Professions of Taste to its climax. Marked by a "blithe serenity," this work holds in stasis the doubts about aestheticism contained in The Portrait of a Lady, and becomes "the great work of aestheticist art the aesthetic movement itself was unable to create"--it valorizes the aesthetic as a bridge towards the moral, the psychological. Here, Freedman argues, James succeeds in concretizing his heroine's aestheticism and so makes her what Osmond was, one who valorizes surfaces and social forms, but also gives her a power, and a victory, neither Osmond nor Milly ever had. And in her victory is his own, his merger of British aestheticism and American commodification. In the symbol of the golden bowl is a representation of art transcending life, while the bowl as commodity, which the novel insists on, fuses aesthetic detachment with that power of art to mould and go beyond life.

When we recollect that James, the consummate aesthete (of whom the Prime Minister, Asquith, facetiously complained that in supporting his application for British nationality he would have to testify to his ability to write comprehensible English) evidently thought, on his deathbed, that he was that nineteenth-century avatar of worldly power, Napoleon Bonaparte, we see a certain neatness about both his human and his artistic ends.

Of all the books of the last twenty-five years that have related James to naturalism, melodrama, the Ibsenist theatre, and so on, Professions of Taste is both the most illuminating and the most interesting, its interest deriving from its very strong sense of narrative. A wry note, however. To work the index is to see the changing of the guard in Jamesian studies, even if one is not inclined to count the number of incidences in the text itself of the de rigueur verbs like valorize, reify, foreground, interrogate. But Matthiessen is referred to very much in passing, Krook not at all, Quentin Anderson and Marius Bewley appear only in the introduction, and Leon Edel, of all people, is mentioned only twice, somewhat dismissively, on the point of James's sexual ambivalences.

After the long sojourn in James's house of aestheticism that a reading of Professions of Taste entails, however, the irreverent reader might find common ground with Theodore Roosevelt, who of course does not figure here. Writing to Henry Cabot Lodge, the exponent of the strenuous life refers to the likes of Henry Adams and James as "men of refined and cultivated tastes, who lived apart from the world of affairs, and who, if Americans, were wholly lacking in robustness of fiber." It will

not take away from our admiration for Mr. Freedman's book if we say Amen.

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* * *

Christmas Story: John Ruskin's Venetian Letters of 1876-1877. Edited, and with an Introductory Essay on Ruskin and the Spiritualists, His Quest for the Unseen, by Van Akin Burd. Newark: University of Delaware Press; London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1990. 295 pp. £32.50.

This is an important, most scholarly, widely researched contribution to our understanding of the enigmatic, frenetically busy later Ruskin: as he wrote, "thousand things in my head pushing each other like shoals of minnows". (178). "Christmas Story" is Ruskin's own title for the three central letters written home to his almost maternal cousin Joan Severn from Venice, 27 December 1876 to 3 January 1877. They are here supported by other, almost daily unpublished letters from the period. All are provided with ample annotation and illustration and with a painstaking essay on Ruskin and the spiritualists by the conscientious editor. Burd has also edited Ruskin's letters to the girls of Winnington School (1969) and a definitive account of Ruskin and his beloved Rose La Touche, focussing on her unpublished diaries of 1861 and 1867 (1979).

Burd shows in a detailed study how Ruskin from the 1860s went along with his spiritualist friends, including the Cowper-Temples and Elizabeth Barrett Browning, though the latter did not help by calling herself "a

wicked spiritualist" (49). Ruskin felt he was "a fatal Non conductor" (44). He was "amazed with the manner and the triviality of the manifestations" (54) which included "table-tilting and levitation" (42). He asked: "what is the use of its curing Miss B's finger when she squeezes it in a door--and not curing Danish armies--nor poisoning Russian & Prussian ones?" (55). He betrays scepticism, serious and playful: "I don't see why any one should be unhappy if this is indeed so" (43).

Are you quite sure you are in town?--I have an uneasy feeling that this can only be a spiritual manifestation from Curzon Street. But I'll come at seven on Thursday to see.

To Elizabeth Browning Ruskin wrote "that he does not laugh at the subject, nor does he believe" (50). "It seems to me that the spirits are in too great a hurry to enlarge my opportunity of investigation" (54); "I can only tell you my poor puzzlements--opinions I have none" (61). In the manifestations of the medium David Douglas Hume he experienced a "great sense of a wrongness and falseness somewhere" (60). He fears that they may be the sign of the Fiend at work. "I want you and Mr. Cowper to take a quiet walk with me, through some of the streets of London, chosen by me, and to talk of these things there--in broad daylight."

The alternative to relying on such experiences is to be never misled by wholesome practical observance of human charities, and honourable laws. We have then--to abjure all doubtful and painful enquiry--to determine what is without all dispute--right & kind--& to do that--

expecting God to teach us, then, whatever He wishes us to know. ...

As far as I have any hope or belief myself--it is, that there is a spiritual world--but that the crimes of all of us, (by connivance if not by commission--) have separated us from the angels--and now at last brought up Hell, tormenting the poor best of us perhaps the most. (67ff)

Yet, in his longing for "a sensible miracle" (66), Ruskin is still sensitive, as Burd points out, "to any currents from the spiritual world" (71). He felt the void caused by the deaths of his mother and father. He especially sought contact with his beloved Rose, who died in 1875. In 1876-77 he was overwhelmed by spiritualist evidence presented to him at the Cowper-Temples', though here even the sympathetic editor is sceptical. According to Myers, a learned spiritualist, this was Ruskin's "one brief season" of "trust in the Unseen" (131). Instead he was content to be floated as he himself said, "down the wayside of the world like a straw in a gutter" (132).

In 1874 he copied and was deeply affected by the painting of Cimabue at Assisi, particularly the Madonna, whose influence on him was aesthetic, ethical and spiritual. This anticipated the experience of Carpaccio's St. Cecilia in wonderful Venice in the following year. Now he believed he made the marvellous contact which, with perhaps justifiable exaggeration, Burd calls a "point in Ruskin's life" (29). According to Burd, the paintings show "the presence of a spiritual power working through chance to teach the person who will yield himself to it" (27). Only more than chance and will are at work. The medieval Italian saint and the pious

Irish Victorian girl both communicated with Ruskin over a period of days when he felt that his experience was especially providentially directed.

The letters are most valuable as evidence of the great range of human experience of which Ruskin was capable and which he could articulate. This extended from the infantile as he posed as a child in his letters to his caring cousin Joan, as well as to Mrs Cowper-Temple, using a "little language" (29): "I'm back among the ghost peepies, oo know" (130). It passed through the quotidian recording of events to the ethical, didactic, and profoundly spiritual. Centrally, he was taught and led to teaching. The last is to be traced in Fors Clavigera.

The book is decorated with a jacket and frontispiece showing Ruskin's painstaking water-colour facsimile of Carpaccio's painting. In working on it he got as close as he could to the portrait of the sleeping saint: "She let me see her hair, every bit of it to-day, in and out" (244).

Fancy having St. Ursula right down on the floor in a good light and leave to lock myself in with her. ... There she lies, so real, that when the room's quite quiet, I am afraid of waking her! (147)

In the picture the saint lies innocently at dawn, while a girl recording angel stands at the foot of her bed. In the background the door is ajar. Ruskin is the human, both intrusive and invisible, masculine equivalent of the angel. He is conscious of his frailty and inadequacy as he seeks to pass on the strong message from the saint. His health broke down twelve years later and he died in 1900. He is, in the words of the epigraph quoted appropriately

from Wordsworth, "The Transitory
Being that beheld / The Vision ...".

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* * *

Sylvia M. Barnard. To Prove I'm Not
Forgot. Manchester University Press,
1990. \$39.95 U.S.

Sylvia Barnard's To Prove I'm Not
Forgot is subtitled "Living and Dying
in a Victorian City," and the sub-
title, though not as catchy as the
title, is more enlightening. Barnard
has had the clever idea of developing
a sketch of nineteenth-century life
in Leeds by taking a figurative
stroll through Beckett Street Ceme-
tery, opened in 1845, pointing out to
the reader the more interesting of
the graves, the memorials over them,
and the people within them. The vari-
ety among the last (or late departed)
gives her the opportunity for short
disquisitions in the various chapters
on the provision of new cemeteries
and their administration; on the
poor, their housing and occupations;
on the religious affiliations of all
classes; on the causes of death, both
commonplace and bizarre; on the pros-
perous and the benefactors; on pro-
fessionals; on soldiers, before and
after their discharge; on Leeds' cul-
tural life; and on Leeds' criminal
life and those who tried to prevent
it. Barnard concludes with descrip-
tions of the more engaging memorials
still to be found along the paths of
Beckett Street Cemetery. The accounts
are as haphazard and evocative as you
would expect from such a stroll.

Many an academic reader may balk at
the unacademic, sometimes disorderly,
profusion of fact and opinion that
flows from Barnard as she rattles on
about the people and institutions

brought to mind by the gravestones.
The love of a graveyard and its con-
tents is an unusual catalyst for
research and the research reflects
the higgledy-piggledy state of the
gravestones. The love triumphs and
the reader, at least this reader,
dropped her critical guard after the
first dozen or so pages and read with
the same tolerance and pleasure as
one bestows on Victorian reminis-
cences such as Sala's. The comparison
is apt despite Barnard's greater
separation from the time about which
she writes; she writes of a Leeds she
has come to know and love and wishes
to have remembered in much the same
way as Sala writes down his memories.
There are many charming vignettes
that throw into relief Victorian
people and their lives, giving the
book a cheerful, gossipy air. For
example, at the very beginning John
Robson--the name caught my attention
--makes his appearance:

The grazing at the new cemetery
had been let to Mr John Robson, of
Thwaite Gate, whose sheep had
helped ensure the grass would be
trim for the arrival of the first
clients. (2)

The man and his sheep come to life;
one wonders if he hummed "Where sheep
may safely graze" as the canny York-
shire men wasted no blade of grass in
turning a farthing where turning a
sod.

Such an approach leads inevitably to
moments that awake the slumbering
critic in the reader. Every once in a
while, it is almost as though Barnard
has appeared in person to make sure
that the reader is paying sufficient
attention, is being sufficiently im-
pressed:

A surprisingly large number of
inquests held on people afterwards

buried at Beckett Street Cemetery are the result of traffic--yes, traffic--accidents. (67)

I could feel myself jerk upright mentally and respond, "Oh really? Wow! That is surprising." (One of the effects of Barnard's style is to make it hard not to lapse into the first person when talking about her book.) On occasion the bewildered reader wonders how Barnard got, for instance, from Joseph Fountain via chromolithography to John Langford Pritchard. It is quite simple:

The earliest playbills consisted of fairly densely packed print, the title of the play and the names of the actors standing out in lettering of graduated sizes. The inclusion of a woodcut scene, which by the nature of the process was somewhat crudely done, more readily attracted the attention of passersby; and the next major development was the expensive but extremely attractive method of chromolithography. ... In 1887 the Yorkshire Post carried an obituary on Joseph Fountain, from which it seems that he came somewhere in between the woodcut and the chromolithograph.

There follows an excerpt from the Yorkshire Post and then Barnard's account continues, drawing heavily, if not entirely, on the Yorkshire Post's:

For many years Fountain's ran a successful business in Leeds, but at the end of his life Joseph seems to have suffered financial, physical and possibly mental deterioration, and his affairs got into such a state that he had to be rescued by a benefit performance at the Grand Theatre (consisting of the triple bill The

Colour Sergeant, Clerical Error and Chatterton, produced and acted in by the theatre's lessee, Wilson Barrett). The artists gladly gave their services and the audience its money, for genial Joe, president of the Albion Club, was a popular man, intimate with and respected by the most prominent members of the theatrical profession, and, as the Yorkshire Post continued warmly, "his unfailing fund of good humour endeared him to an unusually large circle of personal friends".

The production of theatre posters by chromolithography from the mid-1880s came too late for one of Beckett Street Cemetery's actors, John Langford Pritchard, who died in 1850 at the age of fifty-two.

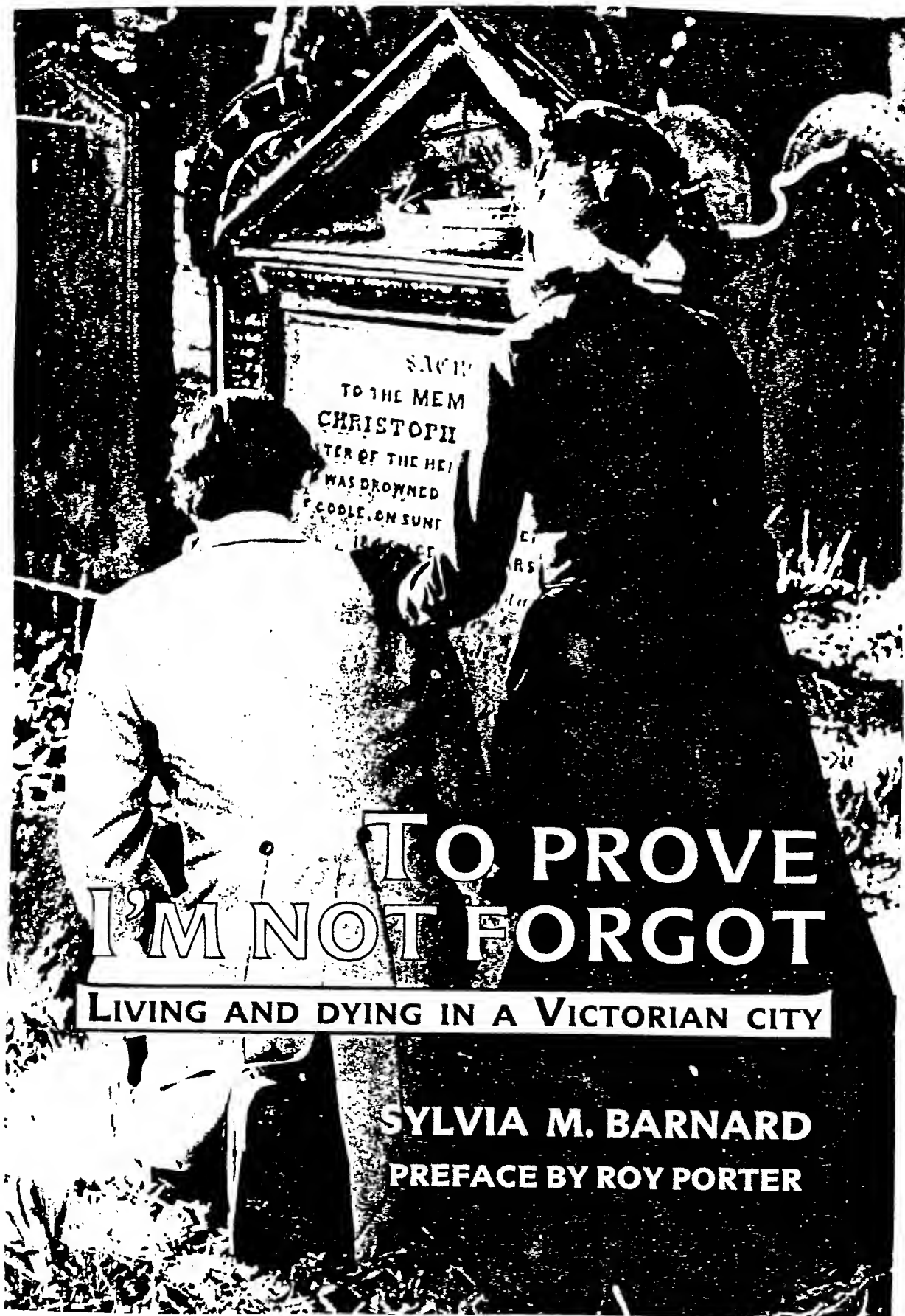
(150-1)

And there follows a paragraph about Pritchard, ending with a choice DNB characterisation: "He was a sound, careful and judicious actor, but only just reached the second rank" (151).

This long quotation aptly illustrates both the weaknesses and the strengths of Sylvia Barnard's unusual book. Her account of Leeds' life meanders along the cemetery walks, often with very dubious connections between one byway and the next. But if the reader is content to follow along, this guided tour is full of most enlightening trivia (and more traditional facts and statistics), out of which gradually emerges an intimate picture of the varied life of nineteenth-century Leeds long since buried in Beckett Street Cemetery.

Ann Robson
University of Toronto





TO PROVE I'M NOT FORGOT

LIVING AND DYING IN A VICTORIAN CITY

SYLVIA M. BARNARD

PREFACE BY ROY PORTER

Exhibitions

Art Gallery of Ontario/Musée des beaux-arts de l'Ontario.

"The Earthly Paradise: Arts and Crafts by William Morris and His Circle from Canadian Collections"
25 June-6 September 1993.

This is the most comprehensive exhibition of the work of William Morris and Morris & Co. to take place in North America. Drawn exclusively from Canadian public and private collections, it contains approximately 285 objects in all media, including paintings, drawings, prints, wallpaper, books, stained glass photographs, furniture, jewellery, metalwork, and textiles. A handsome 312-page catalogue with contributions from fourteen scholars, containing approximately 150 colour plates and 100 black and white plates, will be co-published by Key Porter Books and the Art Gallery of Ontario to accompany the exhibition.

William Morris (1834-96), the British artist, designer, craftsman and visionary, is the acknowledged father of the international Arts and Crafts movement. He was the catalyst for a group of Victorian artists and designers that included the Pre-Raphaelites Dante Gabriel Rossetti and Edward Burne-Jones, and the potter William de Morgan. Rebelling against the unsightly products of the industrial revolution, they decided to band together to produce decorative arts that would be both useful and beautiful and enrich the quality of everyday life, drawing their inspiration initially from the art of the Middle Ages.

The exhibition is coordinated by Dr. Katharine Lochnan, the Gallery's curator of Prints and Drawings, with the assistance of Dr. Douglas E. Schoenherr, associate curator of Prints and Drawings, National Gallery of Canada, and Morris literary scholar Dr. Carole Silver, professor of English Literature and chair of the Humanities Division of Yeshiva University, New York.

"The Earthly Paradise" will travel to three other venues: the National Gallery of Canada, the Musée du Québec, and the Winnipeg Art Gallery. Organized and circulated by the Art Gallery of Ontario, "The Earthly Paradise" has received generous financial support from the Museums Assistance Program of the federal Department of Communications.

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Osborne Collection of Early Children's Books. Toronto Public Library, 40 St. George St., Toronto.

"Healthful Sports for Young Ladies & Gentlemen": An Exhibition of 19th- & 20th-Century Books of Children's Games and Sports. 25 February-3 June 1993.

"A Quick Wit and a Light Hand": Design Movements and Children's Books, 1880-1910. 20 June-15 September 1993.

"A QUICK WIT AND A LIGHT HAND"

JUNE 10 - SEPTEMBER 15, 1993



An exhibition at the
Osborne Collection of Early Children's Books
Toronto Public Library
40 St. George St.
Toronto